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Bert Wilder Marshall Jr.

A Life in Service to His Country

November 9, 1918 — March 31, 1979

Royse City, Texas • Eighth Air Force • 355th Fighter Group

Compiled and Edited for the Marshall Family Archive • 2026

Foreword

The life of Bert Wilder Marshall Jr. is, in every meaningful sense, the story of twentieth-century America made vivid and personal. Born into the hardworking, sun-weathered world of a small Texas railroad town at the close of the First World War, he grew to manhood during the lean years of the Great Depression, earned national recognition as one of the finest athletes his state had ever produced, and then answered the call of a generation by taking to the skies over Nazi-occupied Europe in the most consequential air campaign in history. He emerged from that crucible as a decorated ace, a decorated leader, and a man of unshakeable character — and he spent the remainder of his long career building upon those qualities in the corridors of Cold War command and the boardrooms of the American aerospace industry. To read the story of Bert Marshall is to encounter a life that spans cotton fields and cockpits, chalk-dusty classrooms and flak-filled skies, the quiet dignity of a family man and the fierce concentration of a fighter group commander pressing an attack at treetop level over northern Germany.

> *This manuscript endeavors to tell that story in full — with the completeness and the respect it deserves.*

I. Early Life & Education

On the ninth day of November, 1918 — the very eve of the Armistice that ended the First World War — Bert Wilder Marshall Jr. came into the world in Royse City, Texas, a modest but proud community tucked into the northeastern corner of Rockwall County, on the eastern fringes of the great Dallas metropolitan region that had not yet fully taken shape. The timing of his birth carried an almost prophetic quality: a boy born at the close of one great war would come to define himself in the fires of the next. Royse City, founded only three decades earlier by G. B. G. Royse in 1886 when the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad cut through the Blackland Prairie, was a town built on the rhythms of cotton, community, and hard work. Its population hovered around thirteen hundred souls in those early years of the twentieth century, sustained by cotton gins, a gristmill, and the small businesses that lined its commercial streets. It was the kind of place where everyone knew everyone, where a young man's reputation was built by his handshake and his deeds, and where the values of industry, loyalty, and faith were not merely spoken but lived.

Bert Marshall Jr. bore the name of his father, Bert Wilder Marshall Sr., a man of firm principle and practical bent whose influence upon his son would prove lasting and deep. The Marshall family was rooted in the soil and spirit of North Texas, and while the historical record does not preserve every detail of Bert Sr.'s occupation or precise circumstances, the shape of the family's life reflected the contours of working-class respectability common to small-town Texas in the interwar years. Young Bert grew up in a household where ambition

was encouraged and idleness frowned upon, where the Friday night football game was the social pinnacle of the week and the church on Sunday morning anchored the community's moral life. These were not incidental features of his upbringing — they were formative, and their imprint would be visible in every chapter of his adult life.

The years of Bert's childhood coincided with the twin upheavals of the Roaring Twenties and the Great Depression. Royse City, firmly in the heart of the Blackland cotton belt, felt the boom years in a modest way and the bust years with quiet severity. The Depression hit Texas agricultural communities hard when synthetic fibers began displacing cotton in the early 1930s, and a town like Royse City — never wealthy, always industrious — drew in its belt and carried on. The Marshall family moved to nearby Greenville during the Great Depression. For a boy coming of age in those lean years, the experience of scarcity bred resourcefulness, and the communal solidarity of a small town in hard times bred a lifelong appreciation for loyalty and mutual obligation. These were lessons Bert Marshall carried with him into every formation he ever led and every squadron he ever commanded.

It was on the athletic fields of Greenville that Bert Marshall first distinguished himself in a manner that would bring him to the attention of the wider world. Texas has always taken its high school football with a seriousness bordering on devotion, and in the 1930s, when the sport was the central cultural institution of virtually every small community in the state, a truly gifted quarterback was something close to a local celebrity. Bert Marshall was more than merely gifted — he was, by any measure applied at the time, extraordinary. He became the first three-time All-State Quarterback in Texas high school football history, a record of sustained excellence that no other player had achieved until much later and that spoke not only to his athletic ability but to his consistency, his composure under pressure, and his instinctive understanding of how to lead a team through adversity. His prowess was recognized by coaches, journalists, and rivals alike, and his name became known well beyond the borders of Rockwall County.

These were not merely athletic achievements for a young man who would one day lead fighter pilots into combat. They were, in retrospect, the early expression of qualities that would define his military career: an ability to read a complex, rapidly changing situation and respond with confidence; a talent for inspiring those around him; a natural authority that came not from rank but from demonstrated excellence; and an almost preternatural coolness in high-pressure circumstances. The football field was, for Bert Marshall, the first arena in which those qualities were tested and proved. It would not be the last.

II. Vanderbilt University

The reputation Bert Marshall had built on the gridirons of Texas opened doors that might otherwise have remained closed to a young man from a small cotton-belt community with modest financial resources. His exceptional high school career earned him an opportunity to compete at the collegiate level, and he chose to follow his future Hall of Fame coach Henry Frnka to Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee. Frnka began his illustrious Collegiate coaching career as assistant coach to Ray Morrison. For a boy from Greenville, the journey to Nashville represented an enormous step into a larger world, and Bert Marshall embraced it fully.

Vanderbilt in the late 1930s was an institution of genuine intellectual seriousness set against the backdrop of a vibrant, competitive athletic culture. The university's campus, with its Gothic stone buildings and ancient trees, was a world apart from the flat, open landscape of North Texas, and Nashville itself offered a cosmopolitan richness — in music, in culture, in the diversity of its student body — that broadened the horizons of anyone who arrived there with open eyes. Marshall did. He enrolled in the College of Arts and Science and pursued a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics with the same methodical discipline he had applied to every endeavor since boyhood. He graduated in 1939, earning his Bachelor's

degree in Economics in what was one of the last truly peacetime graduating classes Vanderbilt would produce before the world changed forever.

On the football field, Marshall continued to excel in the manner that had first made his name in Texas. He competed as a tailback — the single-wing equivalent of the modern quarterback and safety on defense — and his performances earned him recognition at the national level. He was named a Collier's Second Team All-American in 1938, a distinction conferred by one of the most widely circulated and respected sports publications in the country, a validation that his talents were not merely regional but national in scope. His play drew the attention of coaches, scouts, and sportswriters who recognized in him not only physical gifts but the essential quality of a natural leader: the capacity to raise the performance of every man around him. Off the football arena, he was also chosen Vanderbilt Bachelor of Ugliness as the most recognized and popular student-athlete. It was during this period that Marshall met Claiborne Kinnard, Jr., a fellow Vanderbilt football player and alumni whose friendship and mutual respect would be very important in faraway Britain in 1944.

Beyond the football field, Vanderbilt during Marshall's years was also an institution with a growing awareness of the gathering storms in Europe and Asia. The university had a long-standing relationship with military training going back to the First World War, when Chancellor James H. Kirkland had enthusiastically supported the establishment of the Student Army Training Corps on campus in 1917. By the late 1930s, with war clouds thickening over the Atlantic, the university's Reserve Officers' Training Corps program had taken on a new urgency. Marshall, with his natural inclination toward leadership and his competitive instincts, participated in the military training programs available to him during his college years, laying a foundation of organizational discipline and military bearing that would serve him well in the years immediately ahead.

It is worth pausing here to consider what Vanderbilt gave Bert Marshall beyond a diploma and athletic accolades. The university shaped him intellectually, broadened his cultural and social understanding, and placed him in the company of ambitious, talented young men from across the South and the nation. It introduced him to a world of ideas and institutions larger than any small-town football field, and it instilled in him the self-confidence of a man who had been tested in demanding company and had not been found wanting. When he departed Nashville in 1939 and took his first steps toward a military career, he carried with him not merely credentials but character — forged in the particular crucible of competitive excellence, academic discipline, and Southern collegiate culture that Vanderbilt uniquely provided.

III. Becoming a Combat Aviator

Following his graduation from Vanderbilt in 1939, Bert Marshall wasted no time in pursuing the military career that his ROTC preparation had pointed toward. He joined the Army Reserve — a natural first step for a young man of his background and training — and set about qualifying for the Army Air Corps, the service branch that, even in those pre-war years, was expanding rapidly in response to the growing threat of global conflict. His path led him to Kelly Field, the legendary military aviation complex south of San Antonio, Texas, which had been a central pillar of American military aviation since the First World War and which by 1940 was once again humming with the urgency of a nation beginning to mobilize.

Kelly Field had trained some of the most celebrated aviators in American history, including Charles Lindbergh and Curtis LeMay, and its culture was one of exacting standards, rigorous discipline, and an unyielding insistence on mastery of the machine. Flight training in the early 1940s was a demanding progression through a hierarchy of increasingly

complex aircraft. Primary training introduced cadets to the fundamentals of flight in relatively docile trainers such as the PT-17 Stearman biplane, teaching basic airmanship, coordination, and the foundational skills upon which all subsequent training would build. Basic training followed, with aircraft like the Vultee BT-13 Valiant that demanded greater precision and introduced the student to more powerful engines and more demanding handling characteristics. Advanced training brought the North American AT-6 Texan — a sophisticated, high-performance aircraft by the standards of its day — and it was here that the future fighter pilot's essential skills were honed: gunnery, formation flying, instrument work, and the aggressive maneuvering that aerial combat would demand.

Bert Marshall excelled at every stage of this progression. He demonstrated the instinctive spatial awareness and physical coordination that distinguished natural pilots from those who merely learned to fly by rote, and he combined those gifts with the kind of dogged, methodical commitment to mastery that had characterized his athletic career. He was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in April 1941, receiving his wings from Kelly Field and entering the Army Air Corps as a fully qualified military aviator — months before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor would transform the United States from an ambivalent bystander into an active belligerent in the deadliest conflict the world had ever known.

What followed was a period of significant frustration for a man of Marshall's temperament and abilities. Assigned to the Training Command — first at Victoria, Texas, then at Bonham, Texas — he found himself in the role of flight instructor, passing on to the next generation of pilots the skills he had worked so hard to master himself. This was, in a purely national sense, an enormously important function: the Army Air Forces needed thousands of qualified pilots, and the instructors who produced them were indispensable to the war effort. But for a competitive, aggressive aviator who had spent his college years playing under stadium lights in front of ten thousand screaming fans, the instructor's role, however valuable, felt like standing on the sideline while the game was being played without him.

During those years as an instructor, however, Marshall earned increasing responsibility leading to his final Training Command assignment as CO of the 322 AAFTD squadron for RAF Pilot Officer training at Miami, Oklahoma, accumulating leadership experience that would prove invaluable when he finally reached the combat theater. However, perhaps the most important asset was time in cockpit. By the time he was finally freed from the Training Command and sent to the European Theater, he had logged nearly 2,100 flying hours — an extraordinary total that placed him among the most experienced pilots of his generation. Most combat pilots arrived in England with a few hundred hours at best. Marshall arrived with the kind of instinctive, second-nature command of his aircraft that only thousands of hours of stick time can produce. The Training Command years, frustrating as they were, were in retrospect a gift: they produced in Bert Marshall a pilot of exceptional depth and confidence, one whose skills in the cockpit were so thoroughly ingrained that he could devote the bulk of his mental energy in combat to tactics, leadership, and the destruction of the enemy rather than to the management of his airplane.

Record of Training Service

By the time Capt. Bert Marshall departed for the European Theater in May 1944, he had accumulated nearly 2,100 flying hours in the Army Air Forces Training Command — the great majority as a flight instructor at bases in Victoria and Bonham, Texas. This exceptional total of logged flight time gave him an operational depth that few combat pilots of any nation could match when he arrived at Steeple Morden.

He was promoted to Captain during the extended period of stateside service, and by the spring of 1944, as the Allied war machine was building toward the massive cross-Channel invasion that would crack open Hitler's Fortress Europe, Marshall's persistent efforts to escape the Training Command and reach the combat theater finally succeeded. Before he departed for ETO, Bert and wife Jane spent two weeks with Major Claiborne Kinnard and

wife Judy at their thoroughbred horse ranch in Franklin, Tennessee. He was ordered to the European Theater of Operations in May 1944. The war had been going on for nearly three years. The skies over Germany and occupied Europe had been contested at terrible cost. The Eighth Air Force, operating from bases across East Anglia in England, was engaged in a strategic bombing campaign of unprecedented scope and ferocity, and the fighter groups that provided its escort were at the bleeding edge of some of the most intense aerial combat in the history of warfare. Bert Marshall was going to war at last — and he was ready.

IV. Assignment to the 355th Fighter Group

The 355th Fighter Group had been constituted on November 12, 1942, at Orlando Army Air Base in Florida, and from its earliest days it carried the energy and ambition of an organization that intended to distinguish itself. Initially equipped with the Republic P-47 Thunderbolt — the massive, radial-engined fighter that pilots called the "Jug" for its barrel-shaped fuselage — the group moved to England in July 1943 and took up residence at RAF Steeple Morden, a small airfield set in the gentle rolling farmland of Cambridgeshire, near the market town of Royston. The English countryside around Steeple Morden, with its hedge rowed fields and ancient stone villages, could scarcely have contrasted more sharply with the broad, flat plains of the American Midwest and South from which most of the group's pilots had come, and yet it became home — not merely a staging post but a place of shared experience, of friendship forged under extraordinary pressure, of the kind of community that only arises among men who face death together regularly.

The group flew its first combat mission on September 14, 1943 — a fighter sweep over Belgium — and in the months that followed, its pilots threw themselves into the two core missions of the Eighth Air Force fighter arm: bomber escort and ground attack. Escort missions sent them hundreds of miles into the heart of occupied Europe and, as the range

of their aircraft improved, deep into Germany itself, flying cover for the massive formations of B-17 Flying Fortresses and B-24 Liberators that were systematically dismantling the industrial infrastructure of the Third Reich. These missions demanded everything a pilot had: the vigilance to scan a sky that might at any moment produce a diving Messerschmitt or Focke-Wulf, the discipline to hold formation and protect the bombers even when personal aggression demanded otherwise, and the physical endurance to sit for hours in a cockpit at temperatures that could drop to fifty below zero while wearing oxygen masks and flight gear that left little room for comfort.

In the spring of 1944, the group transitioned from the P-47 Thunderbolt to the North American P-51 Mustang — one of the most significant tactical decisions of the entire air war. The Mustang, with its Rolls-Royce Merlin engine and aerodynamically refined airframe, could escort bombers all the way to Berlin and back, giving the Eighth Air Force for the first time the ability to provide fighter cover over any target in the Reich. On April 5, 1944, the 355th demonstrated its aggressive spirit in spectacular fashion: in the midst of a snowstorm, the group conducted a low-level attack on German airfields, destroying 51-2-81 combined enemy aircraft in the air and on the ground with a audacity that earned it a Distinguished Unit Citation — the highest collective award available to an American military unit. From that mission forward, the 355th Fighter Group was known by a name that said everything about its character: the "Steeple Morden Strafers." No other Army Air Force group, world-wide, would ultimately destroy more enemy aircraft on the ground than the 355th, a record that reflected not only tactical skill but a culture of aggressive, initiative-driven leadership that extended from the group commander down to the newest second lieutenant.

It was into this formidable organization that Bert Wilder Marshall Jr. was inserted on June 3, 1944 — three days before the Allied invasion of Normandy. The circumstances of his arrival were themselves telling. He had started moving through a Fighter Training Unit,

preparing for eventual assignment, when he was literally plucked from that process by his friend Lieutenant Colonel Claiborne H. Kinnard Jr., one of the 355th's outstanding leaders, who recognized Marshall on the recent 8th AF replacement list — with his enormous flight experience and obvious leadership qualities — exactly the kind of officer the group needed as it entered what would be the most intense phase of the air war. Marshall joined the 354th Fighter Squadron, one of the group's three constituent squadrons. On D-Day he flew Ace Henry Brown's WR-Z and then WR-G for his second mission during which he shot down a low flying Ju 87 for his first victory credit. Ten days later he was assigned a P-51C Mustang, serial number 42-103675, which he christened "Jane" — a name that, with successive aircraft, would become his personal signature, flying with him through seven Mustangs and across the entirety of his combat career.

Aircraft of Bert Marshall — The "Jane" Series

Throughout his combat tours, Marshall named each of his P-51 Mustangs "Jane." The series spanned six aircraft: P-51C-10 (42-103675), "Jane"); P-51D-5 (44-13591), "Jane II"); P-51D-10 (44-14409, "Jane III"); P-51D-10 (44-14799, "Jane IV"); P-51D-15 (44-15279, "Jane V"), P-51D-20 (44-72253, "JANE VI") and finally P-51D-25 (44-72953) "JANE VII" — a continuity of personal identity carried across belly landings, combat damage, and reassignment. Only JANE VI, recoded WR-L after battle damaged on April 13, 1945 and Jane VII survived VE-Day and both lost after VE-Day, one in mid-air collision on June 2nd and August 1946 in bad weather during the Occupation of Germany.

The 355th Fighter Group, into which Marshall arrived in June 1944 was an organization at the peak of its form — experienced, aggressive, well led, and deeply proud of its identity. The group's culture was one in which individual excellence was celebrated but always in the service of collective mission; where the instinct for aggressive action was tempered by the understanding that reckless bravado got men killed and failed the bombers who

depended on their escort. Marshall, with his athlete's instinct for teamwork and his instructor's depth of technical knowledge, fit into this culture immediately and naturally. He had come to fight, and he was among men who knew better than almost anyone on earth what that truly meant.

V. First Combat Missions

The skies over Europe in the summer of 1944 were among the most dangerous environments on earth. The German Luftwaffe, though increasingly pressed by Allied air power and the attrition of three years of intensive combat, remained a formidable adversary, capable of putting skilled and determined pilots in modern, high-performance aircraft into the air against any Allied formation that flew within reach. Flak batteries — anti-aircraft guns of every caliber — covered every major target from Berlin to Bordeaux, filling the air with lethal fragments of steel that could tear a fighter or a bomber apart with no warning whatsoever. And below the operational ceiling of these aerial encounters lay an occupied continent of extraordinary complexity, where a pilot shot down or forced to land behind enemy lines faced the prospect of capture, imprisonment, or worse. Into this environment, Captain Bert Marshall of Royse City, Texas, made his combat debut on the first days of June 1944.

His first mission was an Area Patrol on June 5, 1944 — the day before D-Day, as the vast Allied armada was already in motion across the English Channel but before the world knew what was happening. He flew it without incident. But, it was his second mission flown on the next day, on D-Day itself, the day that would go down in history as the largest amphibious invasion ever mounted — that produced his first aerial victory and announced to the 355th Fighter Group that it had acquired an uncommon talent.

On that historic day, as hundreds of thousands of Allied troops poured onto the beaches of Normandy below, the Eighth Air Force flew massive combat operations to support the landings and suppress German air and ground responses. The 355th Fighter Group was part of those operations, and Captain Marshall found his opportunity over the chaos of the beachhead and the roads leading to it. The 354 and 357 Fighter Squadrons encountered an instructor staffed squadron of Junkers Ju-87 Stukas flying low and attempting to sneak their way at dusk to the Normandy beach — and shot all 15 down. Marshall scored his first confirmed aerial kill, his entry into the accounting that would eventually establish him as one of the finest fighter pilots in the 355th Fighter Group.

Two weeks later, on June 20, 1944, Marshall flying his new P-51C named JANE after his wife, demonstrated that his first victory had been no lucky circumstance. On a mission over occupied France and Germany, his fight intercepted a formation of Messerschmitt Me 410s escorted by Bf 109s — the primary German single-engine fighter and a capable, dangerous opponent in the hands of an experienced Luftwaffe pilot — and destroyed two of the 109s in aerial combat, with a probable third. In each case he destroyed a 109 that was on a fellow 354 pilot's tail. In the culture of the Army Air Forces, where aerial victories were credited only when confirmed by gun-camera film, wingman testimony, or ground observation, a "probable" was both a frustration and a mark of aggressive engagement: it meant that the pilot had pressed his attack hard enough to inflict serious, potentially fatal damage even when the final confirmation of destruction could not be obtained. Marshall's June 20 performance — two confirmed kills and a probable in a single mission — was a performance of the highest order, and it marked him immediately as one of the 354th Fighter Squadron's most effective combat pilots.

The early missions also introduced Marshall to the full reality of the air war: the exhilarating speed and violence of aerial combat, which was decided in seconds by increments of skill, positioning, and aggression; the grim arithmetic of the flak batteries, which were

democratic and indiscriminate in their destructiveness; and the peculiar loneliness of the cockpit, where a pilot was simultaneously part of a formation and utterly, irreducibly alone with his decisions and his fate. He flew through all of it with the composure of a man who had been preparing for exactly this test, perhaps without knowing it, for the entirety of his adult life. His superiors noticed. Within the 354th Fighter Squadron, word spread quickly that the new captain from Texas was not merely good — he was exceptional.

The pace of his advancement through the squadron's leadership hierarchy was, by any standard, remarkable. On June 16, 1944 — just thirteen days after joining the group — he was designated as the 354th Fighter Squadron's Operations Officer, a position of significant responsibility that placed him at the center of mission planning and execution. On July 28 he destroyed another Bf 109 in a diving, rolling chase. Within fifty-five days of his first combat mission, on July 31, 1944, he was appointed Commanding Officer of the 354th Fighter Squadron — a promotion of enormous significance that placed him in command of the very unit in which he had arrived as a new pilot barely two months before. The speed of this progression was not merely a reflection of bureaucratic need but a direct expression of the group leadership's confidence that Marshall possessed, in unusual measure, the qualities that distinguished a squadron commander from a merely excellent pilot: tactical judgment, leadership presence, the ability to inspire and direct men under the most extreme stress, and an instinctive grasp of the larger operational picture within which individual sorties were embedded.

> *"He shot down 5 in the air in the fewest missions and shortest time in the 355th Fighter Group."*
>
> *— Bill Marshall,*
>
> Our Might Always; History of the 355th FG in World War II

On August 6, 1944, Captain Marshall became the 355th Fighter Group's tenth ace — a milestone achieved by shooting down his fifth enemy aircraft, this one near Hamburg, in a mission that demonstrated once again his combination of aggression and precision. In the language of military aviation, an "ace" is a pilot credited with five or more confirmed aerial kills — a distinction that, in the context of the Eighth Air Force in 1944, required not only skill and courage but the fortune to survive long enough to accumulate the record. Marshall had reached that distinction faster than any other pilot in the 355th Fighter Group's history.

On August 15th, Marshall's new P-51D, Jane II was hard hit by flak forcing him to make his first belly landing at Steeple Morden. ,

The events of August 18, 1944, provided a stark reminder that even the finest pilot was not invulnerable to the random violence of the air war. While leading the 355th Fighter Group on a low-level strafing attack — the aggressive, dangerous missions that had given the group its "Strafers" reputation and that represented the most hazardous form of aerial combat, since they exposed the attacking aircraft to every form of ground fire at point-blank range — Marshall was struck by flak in a 'borrowed' P-51D at St. Etienne marshaling yard. His aircraft was badly damaged, and he was forced down northeast of Paris, deep in German-occupied territory. The situation was critical in every sense: a downed pilot in occupied France in the summer of 1944, with the ground campaign in full fury following the Normandy breakout, faced an uncertain and potentially fatal fate.

What happened next became one of the legendary stories of the 355th Fighter Group. Lieutenant Royce Priest, watching his commanding officer go down, made the decision that every pilot in such circumstances weighs with full awareness of its danger: he landed his P-51 Mustang — a single-seat fighter with no room designed for a passenger — in an improvised landing in a cut wheat field near where Marshall had come down. He found Marshall ordering him to return without him, refused, and the two men flew back to Steeple Morden together, cramped into a cockpit built for one. It was an act of

extraordinary courage and extraordinary loyalty — the kind of thing that could only happen in a unit where the bonds between men had been forged and proved in the most demanding possible conditions. Marshall survived to fly again, and the story of his rescue became part of the Eighth Air Force institutional memory.

Marshall was promoted to Major after the rescue and received a brand new P-51D, naming it Jane III. When current 355th FG Deputy Commanding Officer Kinnard transferred to 4th FG to train to replace Colonel Don Blakeslee, a command vacancy opened in early September with Marshall promoted to 355th FG Deputy Commander (Acting) but still was responsible for 354FS leadership. In mid-September he promoted Major Charles Lenfest to 354FS Commander.

On September 18th through 22nd Bert Marshall commanded the reinforced 355th FG to escort the Frantic VII relief mission over Warsaw as the 13th Bomb Wing dropped to 10,000 feet to deliver hundreds of cannisters of supplies to the Polish resistance fighters trapped in the Warsaw ghetto. The 355th drove away Bf 109 attacking forces, shooting down four and preventing loss of any B-17s to fighters. The 355th continued, landing at the Soviet airfield at Piryatin, Ukraine. The next escort mission was to bomb marshaling yard at Szolnok, Hungary and continue to Foggia Italy. The 355th returned to Steeple Morden on the 22nd.

On October 3, leading 355th FG ace Henry Brown was shot down by airfield flak near Nordlingen while strafing Deningen airfield. Newly promoted Lenfest in 'borrowed' Marshall's Jane III was stuck in mud taxiing toward Brown. Future North American Aviation B-70 Chief Test pilot Al White landed successfully nearby, intending to give his Mustang up to Lenfest and Brown but they didn't see him so he reluctantly took off to return home. The Eighth Air Force Commanding General was livid at the attempt and issued a stern order to cease rescue attempts to all pilots in VIII Fighter Command. Shortly afterwards, Marshall received another new P-51D which he named Jane IV.

A recent high pilot time officer transferring from Training Command, Major Gordon Graham, was named 354 FS CO (Acting) under supervision by Marshall who remained Deputy Group Commander and 354 Fighter Squadron Commander until October 26th when Graham assumed command of the 354th.

Between October 26, 1944, when Marshall was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, and his last mission of his 300-hour tour on November 29th. On the 29th he had another belly landing in a badly flak damaged Jane IV, a reminder that he needed a well-deserved rest. He received another new Mustang which he named Jane V, but did not fly acombat mission in it as his tour was over.

Between December 15th and February 15th Marshall was back in the US, rejoining his wife Jane and Kinnard and wife Ruth for a well-deserved rest. Marshall was offered command of a Fighter Group in both the ETO and SWP but Kinnard, scheduled to swap leadership of his 4th FG with Colonel Everett Stewart, CO of the 355th FG appealed to Marshall to rejoin him and the 355th, which Marshall accepted.

Marshall's Jane V had been reassigned and lost to flak on January 29th, 1945, so he received JANE VI on February, 15th.

Marshall and Kinnard returned to combat operations on February 26th to Berlin, with Marshall flying Kinnard's wing. By this time Kinnard's hearing was so badly impaired that he had a very hard time hearing anything over the command radio and assigned various highly experienced 355th pilots to cover him as wingman. The 'two-Lieutenant Colonel' flight flew two more missions together in March.

During this last tour the 355th FG remained as number three 8th AF top scorer (air and ground) over close rival 352nd FG and continued aggressive airfield attacks. During one such mission to Salzburg, Marshall took the 354th on the return leg and attacked the Husum airfield, destroying 37 and damaging 17 for the highest single squadron total in the 355th FG. Marshall, in JANE VI scored four destroyed and two damaged, but JANE

VI was also damaged. Marshall was then assigned JANE VII and JANE VI was repaired and returned as WR-L.

Marshall's last mission was leading the 355th on April 21, an uneventful but hazardous weather conditions mission to Regenburg. Although to 355th FG flew one more mission on the 25th when the 8th AF stood down on future combat missions, Marshall flew the last of 12 missions of his second tour on the 21st.

VI. Cold War Service and Leadership

By the time the war in Europe ended in May 1945, Marshall had completed 72 combat missions and achieved a final aerial score of seven enemy aircraft destroyed in the air, one probable, and one damaged — plus four destroyed and two damaged on the ground. He had been promoted to the rank of Captain to Lieutenant Colonel in a little over seven weeks.

After VE-Day the 8th Air Force began the movement to the Pacific to support the scheduled invasion of Japan but two prominent VIII Fighter Command units, the 355th and the 357th Fighter Groups moved to Germany with 9th Air Force in mid-July. Marshall was promoted to 355th FG Group Commander, just before WWII ended, but declined to voluntarily continue to serve in that capacity, even when a Regular Army Commission was dangled by Major General Quesda. Instead, he chose to return to his wife Jane and new son Bill (named after his deceased brother James William Marshall) on October 7, 1945.

He had served as wingman, flight leader, Squadron Operations Officer, Squadron Commander, Group Operations Officer, Deputy Group Commander and, in the final weeks of the WWII, as the 355th Fighter Group's Commanding Officer. Not one enemy fighter pilot had ever closed enough to even fire shots at him in aerial combat. On the other hand, German flak guns were far more successful. He had belly-landed his aircraft four times —

including the harrowing recovery with Royce Priest — and had emerged from a year of sustained combat without a wound in the body, though certainly not without the kind of psychological marks that intense and prolonged aerial combat inevitably leaves on any sensitive and intelligent man.

The postwar years were years of transition for the American military, as the massive wartime Army Air Forces was reorganized, reduced, and ultimately reconstituted as the independent United States Air Force in September 1947. He joined the Tennessee Air National Guard after separation from Active duty in November 1946 and rejoined USAF in November 1947 in Active Duty Reserve to lead the 4th Air Force 318th Night Fighter Squadron at Hamilton Field California. In March 1947 the Marshall family also expanded to welcome daughter Jane Gray Marshall. His next assignment was to the Fifth Air Force as 35th Fighter Group Commander in May 1948, at Johnson AFB, then 5th AF Headquarter Operations Division in Tokyo, Japan November 1949. These gave him direct exposure to the strategic challenges of the emerging Cold War, which was rapidly reshaping the map of global power and the requirements of American military force. During the Korean War — the first hot conflict of the Cold War era — Marshall flew ten combat missions in the Douglas B-26 Invader, a twin-engine attack aircraft very different from the single-seat Mustang that had made his reputation in the Second World War, but demanding in its own right. His willingness to return to combat duty, even in an unfamiliar aircraft type, reflected the same quality that had characterized his entire career: a commitment to meeting the challenge that was actually in front of him rather than the one he might have preferred.

He was promoted to the rank of Colonel in 1951 — a milestone that placed him among the senior leadership of the United States Air Force and opened the door to the command and staff positions that shaped the service at its highest levels. He commanded the important 3100th Maintenance and Test Wing at Eglin AFB, FL from 1951 through 1954. Under his command, the F-86D, The F-89, F-100 was tested and approved for operational suitability

as well as complete testing of the captured Soviet MiG 15. The Marshall family welcomed daughter Christina at Eglin AFB on November 5, 1954. He attended the Air War College at Maxwell AFB, Montgomery AL in 1955, the premier professional military education institution for senior officers of all services, where the great strategic questions of the Cold War era were debated by the men who would soon be responsible for executing whatever answers the nation's civilian and military leadership arrived at. He also completed studies at the Command and Staff School while stationed at the Pentagon, developing the broader organizational and doctrinal understanding that defined the senior military professional.

His final active-duty assignment was as Deputy Chief of Staff for the Air Defense Command's Missiles Division — a posting that placed him at the cutting edge of one of the most consequential technological and strategic transitions in the history of American military power. The late 1950s were the years when ballistic missiles first moved from the drawing board to the operational inventory, when the strategic triad of bombers, missiles, and submarines was being assembled with enormous urgency in response to the Soviet Union's demonstrated nuclear capabilities, and when the Air Defense Command was struggling to evolve its doctrine and force structure from the world of manned interceptors and radar networks into a new age of supersonic delivery vehicles and thermonuclear warheads. Marshall's work in this division, drawing on his deep understanding of air operations, his grasp of command requirements, and his long experience in translating operational needs into organizational reality, was a fitting capstone to a military career of exceptional length and distinction.

In late 1957, Colonel Bert Marshall resigned from active duty in the United States Air Force — but his military service did not end there. He continued in the Air Force Reserve, where his expertise and experience remained valued.

Service Summary — World War II Combat Record

Total Combat Missions: 72 | **Aerial Victories:** 7 destroyed, 1 probable, 1 damaged | **Ground Kills:** 4 destroyed, 4 damaged | **Forced Landings:** 4 belly landings | **Milestone:** 355th FG's 10th Ace — and the fastest progression to ace status in the group's history. Perhaps the shortest term as Major before promotion to Lieutenant Colonel in only eight weeks.

VII. Civilian Aerospace Career

When Bert Marshall stepped away from the active-duty Air Force in 1957, he stepped not into retirement but into a second career that was, in its own way, as demanding and consequential as the first. The American aerospace industry of the late 1950s was at one of the most extraordinary moments in its history: buoyed by massive defense contracts, energized by the onset of the Space Age following the Soviet Union's launch of Sputnik in October 1957, and driven by the competitive urgency of the Cold War race to develop ever more capable aircraft, missiles, and — within a few years — spacecraft, the industry was a crucible of ambition, talent, and national purpose. It was, in short, exactly the kind of environment in which a man of Bert Marshall's capabilities thrived.

His transition from military to civilian employment was facilitated by the network of professional relationships and the institutional reputation he had built across two decades of distinguished military service. Senior military officers who retire from the armed forces bring to the defense industry a combination of assets that is genuinely rare and genuinely valuable: deep technical knowledge of the operational requirements that define what military equipment must accomplish; established relationships with the military customers who write the contracts and evaluate the products; a thorough understanding of the

procurement process and its organizational dynamics; and the leadership and management skills that decades of commanding military units at progressively higher levels of responsibility inevitably produce. Marshall possessed all of these in exceptional measure, and the aerospace industry recognized it.

From 1957 through 1962 he was Vice President B-70 Program for AVC. From June 1962 through July 1965, he was VP & General Manager of American Airmotive overseeing both Modification Center and the Inspect Repair as Necessary operations in Miami, Florida. Next, he was VP of IRAN operations for Fairchild Hiller at Crestview and St. Augustine, Florida. He joined the Ling-Temco-Vought Corporation in 1969 as VP and Program Manager A7D. He held that position until 1978, retiring from LTV after more than two decades in the aerospace industry, in the same spirit of professional completion that had characterized every chapter of his life: finishing what he had begun, and finishing it well.

VIII. Final Career Years

Having retired from LTV in 1978, he found himself at sixty years of age with a lifetime of extraordinary experience to draw upon and an undiminished appetite for contributing to the institutions and communities he cared about. He was not a man who retired easily in the sense of withdrawing from engagement with the world; rather, he redirected his energies toward a different set of obligations and pleasures, while maintaining the connections to the aviation and veterans' communities that had been the central relationships of his adult life.

In the two years between his departure from LTV and his death in 1979, Marshall drew upon his decades of experience in both military aviation and the aerospace industry to serve in advisory and consultative capacities that allowed him to contribute the wisdom of long

experience to organizations and institutions that valued it. He was sought out by former colleagues and successors who recognized in him a repository of operational knowledge and institutional memory that was, by the late 1970s, becoming rare: a man who had flown combat missions in the Second World War, commanded units in the Korean era, grappled with the strategic challenges of the early Cold War, and then spent two decades translating those experiences into the corporate language of a major defense contractor. The combination was unique and valuable, and Marshall gave of it generously.

He remained deeply engaged with the veterans' communities that kept alive the memory of the Eighth Air Force and the men who had served in it. He was a charter member of the American Fighter Aces Association in September 1960. He joined the 355th Fighter Group Association, like the associations of other Eighth Air Force units, which held regular reunions that brought together the survivors of the air war over Europe — men who had shared an experience that bound them more tightly to one another than almost any civilian bond could — and Marshall was a faithful participant in these gatherings, renewing old friendships, sharing memories, and helping to sustain the collective understanding of what the Eighth Air Force had accomplished and at what cost. He also maintained his connection to the broader aviation community, in which his standing as a WWII ace and senior military officer gave him a recognized place of honor.

He served as an advisor to historical efforts aimed at documenting the history of the 355th Fighter Group — efforts that would eventually produce, among other works, the comprehensive group histories authored by Bill Marshall, *Angels, Bulldogs and Dragons: History of the 355th FG in WWII and Our Might Always: History of the 355th Fighter in World II*. His cooperation with these historical projects reflected a belief that the men who had served in the group, and the larger story of American air power in the Second World War, deserved to be remembered accurately and in detail — that the passage of time and the

natural human tendency to simplify and mythologize must not be allowed to obscure the reality of what had actually happened and what it had actually cost.

In these professional years, Bert Marshall also found time for the personal pleasures and relationships that a life of demanding service had sometimes forced to the margins. He was a devoted family man who took genuine pleasure in the company of his children and grandchildren, and the relative leisure of retirement allowed him to be present in their lives in ways that his military and corporate careers had not always permitted. He remained physically active, maintaining the athletic habits of a lifetime, and he retained the mental sharpness and conversational vitality that had always been among his most attractive personal qualities. Playing Golf and hunting birds as well, annual planned family vacations and hosting backyard cookouts for friends and family characterized much of his free time.

IX. Personal Life and Legacy

Throughout the long arc of a career that took him from the football fields of Greenville Texas to the cockpits of P-51 Mustangs over Germany, from the executive suites of a major aerospace corporation to the reunion tables of aging veterans who had once been young men in leather helmets and silk scarves, Bert Wilder Marshall Jr. remained, at his core, a man of straightforward and enduring personal values. He was, in the estimation of those who knew him well, exactly the same man in private that he presented to the world in public: direct, warm, genuinely interested in the people around him, possessed of a dry and often self-deprecating sense of humor that prevented the weight of his accomplishments from making him pompous, and animated by a faith and a sense of personal responsibility that grounded him across the full range of his experiences.

He was married and built a family that became, in the fullest sense, the foundation of his personal life and the truest measure of his character. His family was his anchor across decades of military life that demanded frequent moves, long absences, and the particular emotional demands of a career in which the possibility of death was a routine professional companion. The constancy and warmth of his home life — sustained through his own commitment and through the partnership of a spouse who bore the particular burdens of a military family with grace and strength — provided the stability that allowed him to give so fully to his military and professional obligations. His children grew up in a household shaped by their father's qualities: his directness, his discipline, his humor, and above all his conviction that service to something larger than oneself was not an obligation to be reluctantly discharged but a privilege to be gratefully embraced.

His faith was a genuine and sustaining element of his personal life, though he wore it, as was characteristic of his generation, without ostentation. The values it reinforced — humility, responsibility to others, the importance of honesty and fairness — were visible in his conduct across every sphere of his life, from the way he treated the most junior pilots in his squadron to the way he conducted himself in the competitive world of corporate aerospace. He was a man of his word in the most fundamental sense: when he made a commitment, personal or professional, he kept it, and he expected the same of those around him.

He was also, to the end of his life, a man who retained a genuine enthusiasm for the sport that had first brought him to public attention. Football remained a lifelong passion — he followed the game at every level with the attentive interest of someone who understood its demands from the inside — and he took a quiet pride in the athletic recognition that accumulated around his early career. He was inducted into the Texas High School Football Hall of Fame in 1971, a recognition of his unique achievement as the only first three-time All-State Quarterback in the state's history — an honor that came nearly four decades after

his playing days had ended but that spoke to the enduring significance of what he had accomplished as a young man in Royse City. Perhaps his most treasured award was induction into the Order of Daedalians

In retirement, he settled in the Dallas area — remaining in the Texas he had never truly left in spirit, even during the long years of military service that had taken him to England, Germany, the Pacific, and the corridors of the Air Defense Command. He enjoyed the company of his grandchildren with the particular delight that grandfathers who have seen much of the world's darkness bring to the uncomplicated joys of family life. He maintained his friendships with the veterans community and remained engaged with the larger life of the city and region that had shaped him. He was, in retirement as in service, a man who was fully present in his life — not coasting toward its end but living it with the attentive engagement that had always been his defining quality.

X. Legacy

The legacy of Bert Wilder Marshall Jr. is not easily summarized, because it operates simultaneously at several different levels — the personal, the institutional, and the historical — and because the qualities that defined it were, in the deepest sense, ones that resist the quantification that biographical summary tends to demand. His aerial victories can be counted; his decorations can be listed; his rank at retirement can be stated precisely. But the more important legacy — the one that endures in the memories of those who served with him, in the culture of a unit whose finest hours he helped to shape, and in the historical record of American air power at its most consequential moment — is harder to capture in a list and more resistant to the passage of time.

His decorations, earned across two wars and a career of sustained distinction, represent the formal record of a service that went well beyond the ordinary. In World War II he was awarded the Silver Star — the third-highest military decoration for valor — as well as the Distinguished Flying Crosse with two Oak Leaf Clusters, recognizing repeated acts of extraordinary achievement in aerial flight. He received the Air Medal with 11 Oak Leaf Clusters, representing an almost continuous record of combat meritoriousness across his 73 mission over two tours. From Allied nations whose freedom he had helped to preserve, he received the Polish Cross of Valor and the French Croix de Guerre with Palm — international recognitions that placed his service in the larger context of the coalition struggle against Nazi tyranny. In Korea, he was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Valor device and two additional Air Medals, confirming that his combat service was not limited to the famous campaign of his youth but extended into the less celebrated conflicts of the Cold War era.

Decoration	**Theater / Period**	**Notes**
Silver Star	World War II (ETO)	Third-highest U.S. military decoration for valor
Distinguished Flying Cross (3 awards)	World War II (ETO)	For extraordinary achievement as P-51 pilot, 354th FS / 355th FG
Air Medal (plus 11 Oak Leaf Clusters)	World War II (ETO)	Sustained meritorious aerial service across 72 combat missions
Polish Cross of Valor	World War II	Poland's second highest decoration for Warsaw Shuttle Mission (Frantic VII)
Croix de Guerre with Palm	World War II	French military honor for contribution to liberation of France
Bronze Star Medal (with Valor)	Korean War	Combat valor during B-26 operations, 5th Air Force
Two Air Medal Oak Leaf Clusters	Korean War	For 10 combat missions in B-26 Invader

Beyond the formal decorations, Marshall's legacy in the 355th Fighter Group is inscribed in the group's operational history in ways that no award citation fully conveys. He achieved ace status in the shortest time from first kill to fifth kill of any pilot in the group's history — a record that reflected not merely skill but the sustained, almost daily pressure of leading from the front. He advanced from new arrival on June 4 to squadron operations officer in ten days, to squadron commanding officer in fifty-seven days — a compression of the normal military career arc that spoke to the confidence his superiors placed in him and the speed with which he demonstrated his capabilities under combat conditions. And on April 13, 1945, he led his squadron to the group's highest single-day ground strafing total — thirty-nine aircraft destroyed without a single loss — in a mission that combined tactical brilliance, precise execution, and the aggressive spirit that the Steeple Morden Strafers had made their hallmark.

His legacy also extended into the broader history of the Warsaw Shuttle Mission. On September 18, 1944, Marshall led the 355th Fighter Group on the last of these shuttle missions — Frantic VII — dropping supplies over Warsaw, where the Polish Home Army was engaged in its desperate and ultimately tragic uprising against the German occupation. The mission was both operationally significant and historically poignant: American airmen flying in support of Polish fighters who were being crushed by a combination of German military power and Soviet political calculation, in one of the most morally complex episodes of the entire war. That Marshall carried the Polish Cross of Valor among his decorations was a recognition of his direct participation in this effort — a recognition from the Polish nation itself that the men of the 355th had been willing to fly when and where it mattered.

His institutional affiliations in the years following the war reflected the range of his commitments and the depth of his engagement with the communities to which he belonged. The American Fighter Aces Association, which brought together the exclusive fraternity of pilots credited with five or more aerial victories, recognized in Marshall one of

its most distinguished members. The Eighth Air Force Historical Society maintained the memory of the greatest air campaign in history, and Marshall's participation in its work helped ensure that the records, the testimonies, and the lessons of that campaign were preserved for future generations. The 355th Fighter Group Association, which carried on the esprit and fellowship of the Steeple Morden Strafers through decades of peacetime, claimed him as one of its most honored members. He was an honored inductee of the Daedalian Society, the premier fellowship of military aviators. Through all of these affiliations, he contributed not merely his name and his decorations but his time, his energy, and his personal commitment to the work of remembrance.

XI. Passing and Final Honors

Bert Wilder Marshall Jr. died on March 31, 1979, in Dallas, Texas — the city that had been the metropolitan anchor of his life from his earliest years in nearby Royse City through the decades of a military and corporate career that had taken him across the world and back. He was sixty years old, having lived a life so densely packed with experience, achievement, and purpose that its brevity seems almost incongruous against the scale of what it contained. He had been born at the end of one world war, had helped to decide the outcome of another, had served through the Korean War and the most dangerous decades of the Cold War, had helped build the aerospace industry that maintained American technological supremacy in the postwar era, and had done all of it while being, by the testimony of all who knew him, a man of genuine warmth, personal integrity, and quiet humor who never lost sight of the relationships and values that gave his service its meaning.

He was laid to rest with his wife Jane of 39 years at Restland Memorial Park in Dallas — a fitting place of final repose for a son of Texas who had spent the great portion of his adult life in service to his country. He eschewed Arlington National Cemetery because because

he had always understood himself as, at bottom, a Texan: shaped by the particular landscape and culture and community of that place in ways that no subsequent experience fully erased. The ceremony of his burial was attended by family, by former comrades in arms, and by colleagues from the decades of civilian service, each constituency representing one of the several worlds that Bert Marshall had inhabited and enriched across his six decades of life.

The tributes offered by those who had known him personally in military service often returned to the same qualities: his composure under pressure, the speed and clarity of his tactical judgment, the way he led by example rather than by authority, and the genuine care he took for the men under his command. The rescue episode of August 1944 — when Royce Priest landed to pull Marshall out of enemy territory and the two men flew home in a single-seat Mustang — was often recalled not merely as a story of military drama but as a symbol of the culture of mutual obligation and personal loyalty that Marshall had helped to build and sustain in the 354th Fighter Squadron and the 355th Fighter Group. A commander earns that kind of loyalty; it is not given freely or automatically. That Priest risked his own life and aircraft to save his commanding officer spoke as eloquently as any citation about the kind of man Marshall had been in the cockpit and in the squadron.

His induction into the Texas High School Football Hall of Fame in 1971 — honoring his unique achievement as the first three-time All-State Quarterback in the history of Texas high school football — had placed him in the company of the greatest athletes the state's formidable high school athletic tradition had produced. His recognition as a Collier's All-American at Vanderbilt in 1938 remained a point of pride for both his family and for the university that had educated him. His induction into the Daedalian Society was a recognition of his status among military aviators. In the dual dimensions of his early life — the athletic and the academic — as in the dual dimensions of his mature career — the

military and the civilian — Bert Marshall had achieved a level of distinction that placed him among a very small number of Americans of his generation.

The enduring memory that Bert Wilder Marshall Jr. leaves behind is, at its most essential, the memory of a man who understood what service meant — not as a slogan or a sentiment but as a daily practice and a lifelong commitment. He served his country in two wars and across three decades of uniform service, and he continued to serve in different ways for the remainder of his life. He served his unit by leading it with skill and courage and genuine concern for the men in it. He served his industry by bringing to it the hard-won knowledge of a man who had seen, firsthand, what the equipment it designed and built was required to do in the most demanding conditions imaginable. He served his community and his family by being present, engaged, and faithful to the relationships that gave his life its texture and meaning.

There is a quality in certain lives that resists the erosion of time — that remains legible and instructive and admirable even to generations separated from it by decades of change. Bert Marshall's life has that quality. The specific aircraft types he flew are now museum pieces; the battles he fought are history; the geopolitical context that shaped his military career has been superseded by events he did not live to see. But the qualities he exemplified — courage, competence, loyalty, leadership, humility, and an unfailing commitment to service — are not time-bound. They are, in fact, exactly the qualities that every generation needs to learn anew, in its own context and its own crucible, because they are the qualities on which the preservation of everything worth preserving ultimately depends.

Bert Wilder Marshall Jr. was, by every measure that matters, a great American. He was a great Texan. He was a great aviator and a great leader. And by the testimony of those who knew him most intimately — his family, his comrades, his colleagues — he was, most simply and most enduringly, a great man. His story deserves to be told and retold, to be remembered and honored, in a spirit of gratitude equal to the magnitude of what he gave.

An Overview Note on Some Sources

This manuscript has been prepared using primary archival records from the American Archive's military personnel database, the Hall of Valor military awards database, the P-51 Mustang Pilots Association records, his flight records (contributed by Bill Marshall, October 2006), and the USAF Historical Research Center 355th Fighter Group unit history. Additional contextual information on the 355th Fighter Group's history and operations has been drawn from the Second Air Division Memorial Library digital archive and published unit histories. Community background for Royse City and Greenville, Texas, has been drawn from the Texas State Historical Association's Handbook of Texas Online*. Vanderbilt University articles were drawn from the Nashville Banner. His son Bill Marshall supplemented this manuscript source base with Bert Marshall's personal scrapbooks, flight logs, aircraft operator certifications and military records, 355th Fighter Group History contained at USAFHRC, Maxwell AFB, AL, correspondence, photographs, and family recollections in possession to create the definitive archive of Bert Marshall's life and service.*

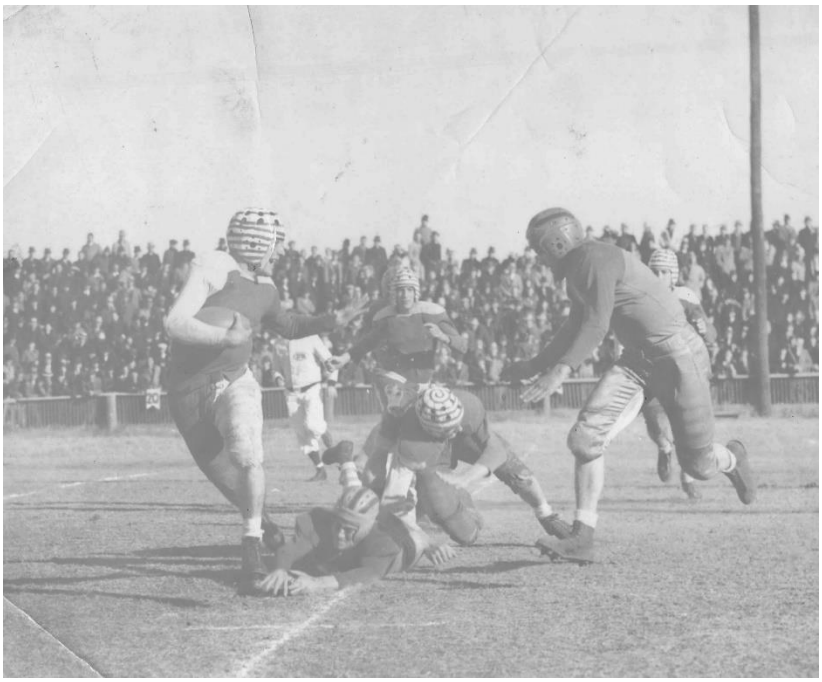
END OF MANUSCRIPT A

Bert Wilder Marshall Jr. — November 9, 1918 – March 31, 1979

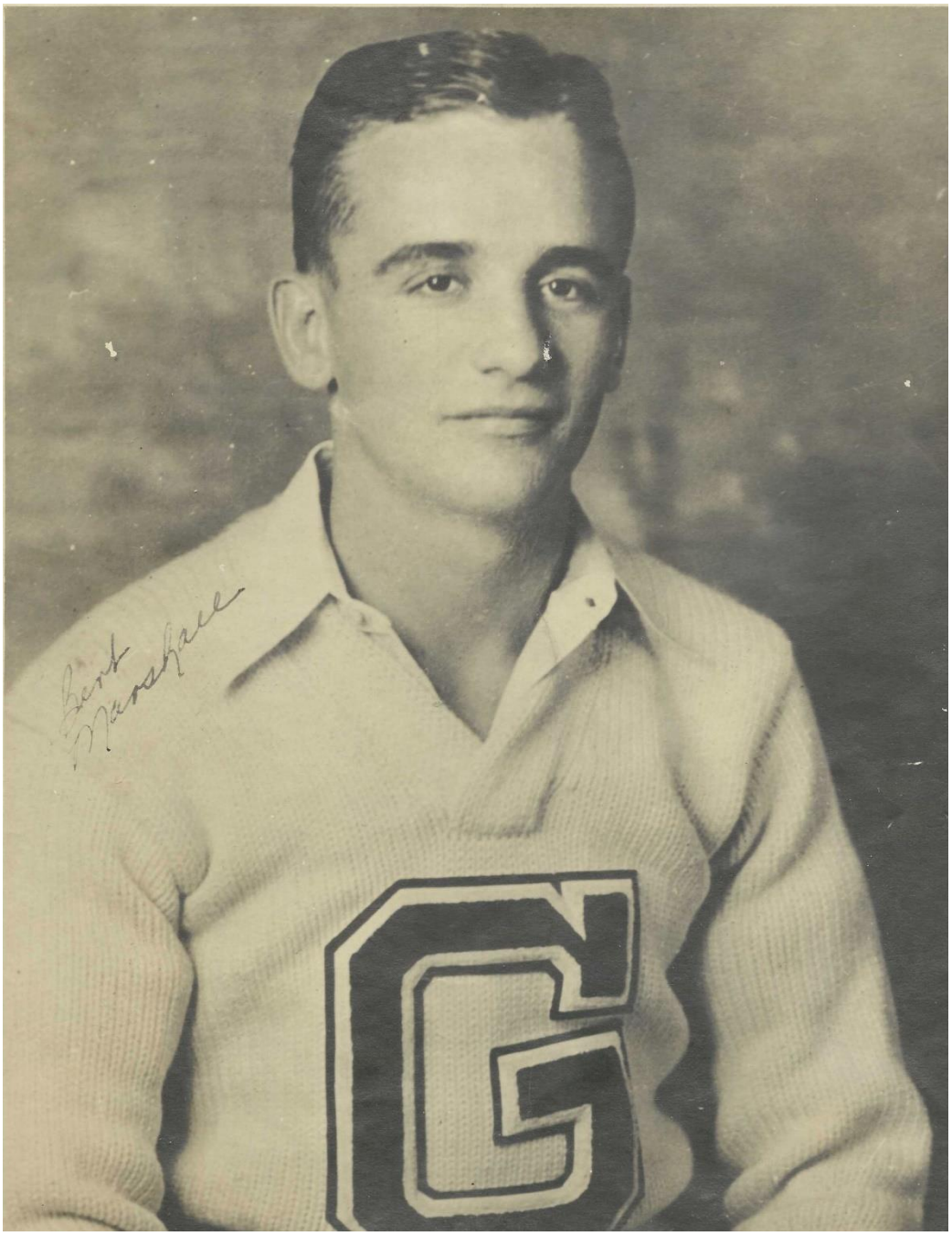
Compiled for the Marshall Family Archive • June 2026

PHOTOGRAPH Section follows:

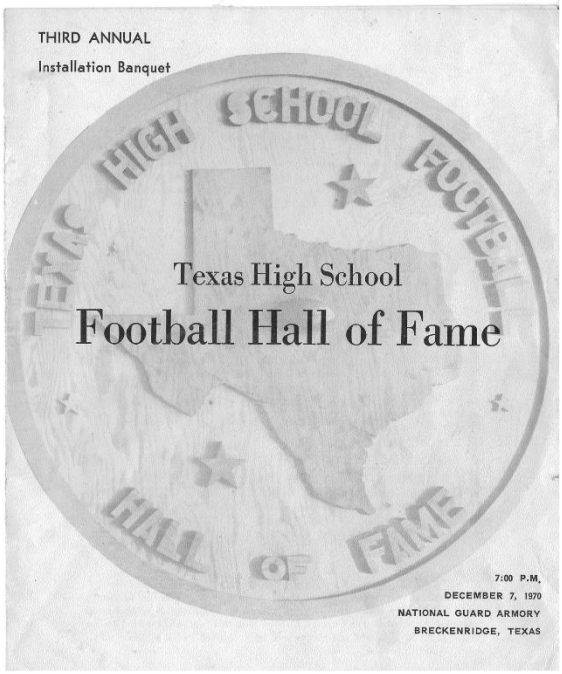
Bert Wilder Marshall, Jr. Circa 1928, Greenville, TX.



Bert Marshall, 14-year-old Greenville Lions Quarterback leading Greenville to Texas High School Football championship Against Dallas Tech H.S. He was the first Three-Time Texas High School Quarterback, beginning 1933.



Bert Marshall as senior at Greenvile High School, 1936. He had scholarship offers at Texas A&M and SMU but chose to follow his future Hall of Fame coach to Vanderbilt University. Frnka served as assistant to head coach Ray Morrison.



Inducted into Texas High School Football Hall of Fame, presented by former head coach Henry Frnka in 1970.

Bert Marshall on option versus University of Tennessee. Played with broken (not bruised) ribs. Showing underneath jersey is evidence of taped foam rubber. Vanderbilt's 14-0 loss set up SEC championship showdown the next week with Alabama for Rose Bowl berth.

-Gallant Bert Marshall Goes 16 Precious Yards

, Vol Capt. Bowden Wyatt is taking a pass on the six-yard line from Babe Wood. He was downed arshall. Bert played in the game with badly bruised ribs which gave him untold misery throughout esse 13. The advance was turned back by the savage Vol line.

Bert Marshall Gave Great Display Of Intestinal Fortitude Saturday

By DUDLEY GREEN

Tennessee gave its display of power but to Vanderbilt's Bert Marshall, 146-pound quarterback, goes the plaudits for the greatest display of intestinal fortitude, or as football players call it, guts, that Dudley Field fans have seen in many a year.

Playing with several bruised ribs that shot pains through his body with every move, Marshall ran and directed the Commodore attack in a flawless manner until he was finally forced to leave the game in the final period.

The Marshall injury was an old one. He received it in the Georgia Tech game but told the coaches nothing about it. It was aggravated in the Sewanee fracas and he spent the greater part of last week under lamps trying to bake out the soreness.

The heat did some good but the morning of the game found Marshall still in pain. He wanted to have some dope shot in his side to deaden the pain but the move was frowned upon. Instead he was rigged up with sponge rubber and a rib pad.

It helped some, but with every step the little fellow felt as if some one was sticking knives in his side. Still he gave no evidence of his injury as he passed and ran against the Volunteers.

If the injury slowed him down, and Marshall says it did, the fans couldn't tell it. Neither could Maj. Bob Neyland, Tennessee coach.

The Major was high in his praise of Marshall.

"I thought Marshall was Vanderbilt's offensive standout," said Neyland. "He was a constant threat throughout the ball game."

After the game, it was difficult for Marshall to get into his clothes. His face was drawn with pain but he didn't murmur. He went in to congratulate the Tennessee players and then hied away to his room.

He spent the greater part of Sunday in bed. He even passed up a trip to his Greenville, Texas, home so great was the pain. He only wanted to rest his weary body in order to be ready for Alabama Thanksgiving Day.

Tennessee received the glory for its 14 to 0 victory but Marshall's display of courage certainly should rate a place in Vanderbilt's history.

There'll be quite a shooting match at Vanderbilt this afternoon and Bert Marshall, brilliant Commodore junior quarterback, will do a great deal of the "shooting" for the Gold and Black. Bert's passing sparked the winning drive against Kentucky last week.

Post Mortems

By John Putman

Introducing A Jack Rabbit Who Nearly Made Away With Tide's $105,000 Prize Last Season

RABBIT—The Alabama coaching staff has an acute case of jitters on the eve of tomorrow's annual Turkey Day joust between the Crimson Tide and Vanderbilt's tricky Commodores. And there are good reasons; two of them, to be exact, although they dove-tail into a single big one.

Reason No. 1, of course, is that injuries to Fullback Charlie Holm and Center Carey Cox have cracked two ribs in Alabama's traditionally rock-ribbed gridiron defense. That situation was delved into rather thoroughly yesterday.

Reason No. 2 is attached. In case you don't recognize those flying feet they belong to a Texas jack-rabbit who is known by many and sundry names but modestly prefers plain Bert Marshall. He plays a whole lot of football for a little squirt.

If you don't know the rest of the story you have flunked our memory-quiz. One year ago, almost to the day, Bert nearly made away with $105,000 of Alabama's athletic funds (which represents the Tide's share of the last Rose Bowl receipts) and would have succeeded except for the unerring toe of Haywood Sanford. I hope your memory doesn't need prodding in connection with that eleventh-hour field goal that kept the Crimsons' 1937 record unsullied.

* * *

But let's get back to tomorrow and the one big reason for Alabama's worst case of jitters this season. Marshall is a problem to solve any time and with Holm and Cox on the injury shelf, Coach Frank Thomas frankly fears it can't be done. Anyway, last year's Crimson Tide, which had considerably more success than the current edition, failed quite miserably.

* * *

GRID GENIUS—Running the risk of telling about something Alabama football fans remember only too well, although only a small percentage were at Nashville to see Marshall step, I'll attempt to describe briefly the Texas rabbit's great performance last Thanksgiving Day.

Marshall played only a few minutes of the first half. But he went to work on the Crimson Tide at the beginning of the third quarter (with Alabama leading 6-0) and for 20 minutes completely dominated the scene.

After the Tide had received and punted, Marshall took the ball on his own 24-yard line and ran it back 12 yards. Three plays made four yards and then Bert punted 58 yards to Alabama's three-yard line. Kilgrow returned the kick 20 yards but Vandy had gained on the exchange nevertheless. Marshall ran back the next punt seven yards to Alabama's 44. He broke through for 11 yards and then passed to Andrus for 15 more. Next Bert circled end for nine, to put the pigskin on the Tide's eight-yard line. He carried it six yards further on two tries to build up the Commodores' important touchdown. Agee kicked goal and Vandy led, 7-6.

* * *

It is impossible to describe adequately the offensive genius of that 150-pound kid whose long, spiralling punts, bullet passes, and rabbit runs nearly wrecked Alabama. Let it go by saying he was treme[n]dous and a source of irritation to Coach Frank Thomas' Rose Bowl-bound Crimsons. The Tide finally hit upon the only safe defense against such brilliance—taking the ball and holding it with a [illegible] **counter-offensive which was climaxed late in the fourth** [illegible] **. But** [illegible] **57-yard** [illegible] **ked like**

[illegible] **te of Ala-** [illegible] **homas into** [illegible] **odoros, to-**

[illegible] **be recog-** [illegible] **of a game** [illegible] **mitics for** [illegible] **watching**

[illegible] **onent his** [illegible] **Tide was** [illegible] **last year.** [illegible] **for what** [illegible] **ning from**

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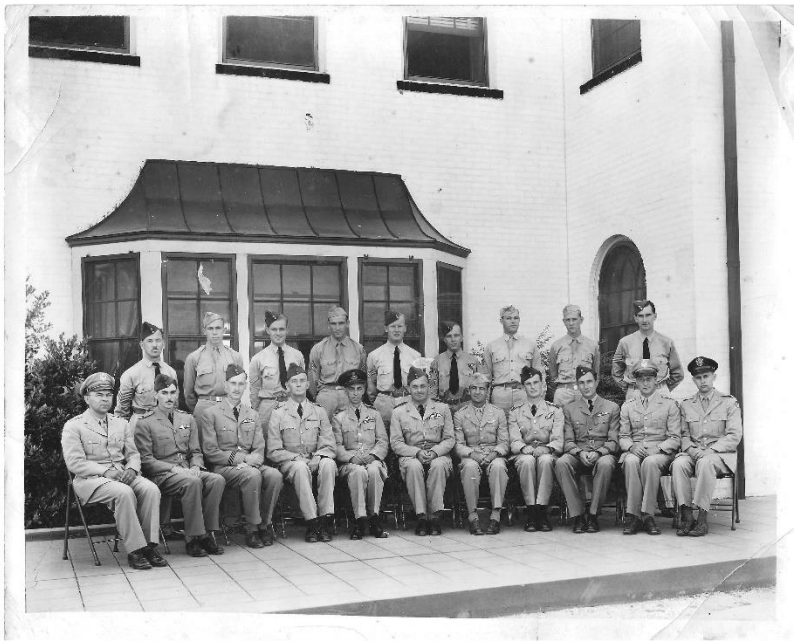
[illegible] **ssion that** [illegible] **hat Coach** [illegible] **. Without** [illegible] **s who can** [illegible] **olm's sub-**

Vanderbilt did not prevail against Tennessee but Marshall, still with ribs healing, forced Alabama to the threshold with a long drive, scoring the game's only touchdown, to lead 7-6 in the SEC championship – only to lose 9-7 on a long field goal in the last minute.

VOTE FOR
ERT MARSHALL
55
CANDIDATE FOR
achelor of Ugliness
★ ★ ★
Senate Members:
GMA ALPHA EPSILON, PHI DELTA THETA,
ELTA KAPPA EPSILON, BETA THETA PI,
SIGMA CHI, ALPHA TAU OMEGA
and KAPPA ALPHA
LECTION FOUNDER'S DAY, MAY 27
Two Vandys Honored
The Commercial Appeal's annual All-Southeastern Conference football team, announced yesterday, honors Bert Marshall, Vandy's red-tipped spearplug, and Capt. Carl Hinkle.
Marshall, who reached a new high in the Alabama battle, is the lone sophomore to be chosen on the all-star machine. He was picked over Fletcher Sims, Walter Mayberry, Babe Wood and other quarterbacks who have been in the headlines for two and three seasons.
David Sloan, Commercial Appeal sports editor, writes of Marshall.
"Bert Marshall earned the quarterback post because of his play against Alabama. This 144-pound Vanderbilt youngster is a spark plug, a climax run-
ner, a fine passer, and a great runner. He is cool, collected, capable and a nightmare for the Commodores' opponents, who will have to contend with him for two more years."

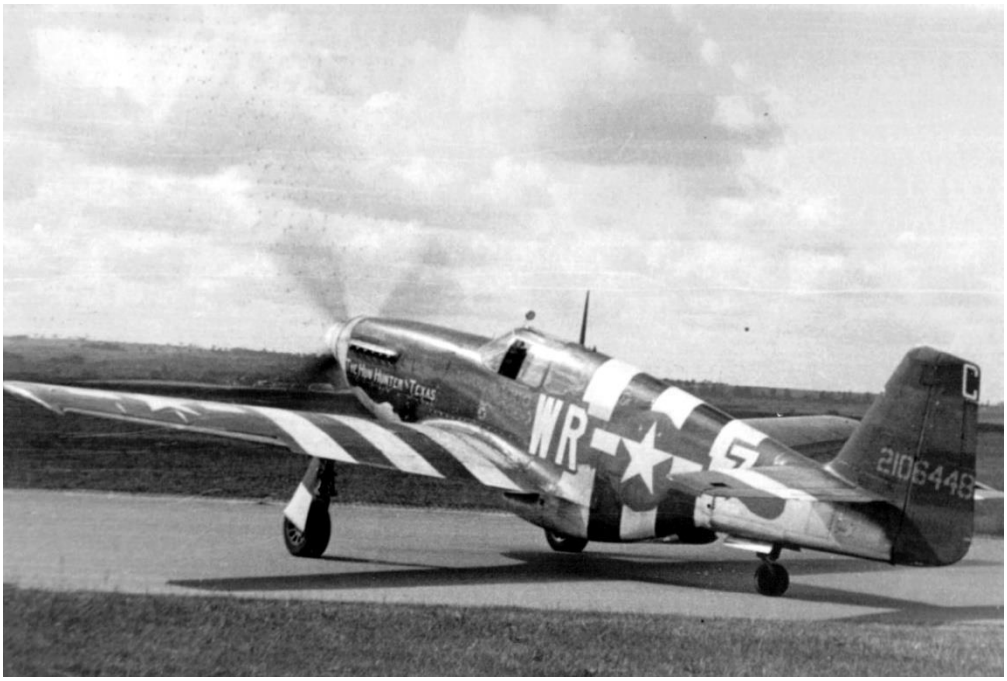
Bert Marshall was elected Vanderbilt prestigious Bachelor of Ugliness Award in 1938.

Picture in upper left is brother Billy and Bert Marshall, circa 1922.



Last assignment in Training Command as CO of the 322nd RAF Pilot Training Squadron at Miami, OK, beginning May 1943. Marshall fifth from right, sitting.

Captain Bert Marshall and Jane Gray Hilsman were married in Atlanta, Georgis in April 1943. She was a junior at Vanderbilt University at the time.



Marshall taking off on second mission, D-Day, in Henry Brown's WR-Z. He scored his first victory credit, one of 15 Ju 87s the 355th FG destroyed on June 6th.

Marshall was assigned new P-51C-10 42-103795, which he named JANE after wife Jane. He traded this P-51C for a new P-51D-5 44-13591, July 16th, named Jane II. Jane II was later damaged by flak, resulting in his belly landing at Steeple Morden on August 15th.

Graham and Wright, happy to be home after Marshall shot down a Bf 109 off each of their tails over Rugen Island, June 20th. Marshall was flying JANE on its second mission.

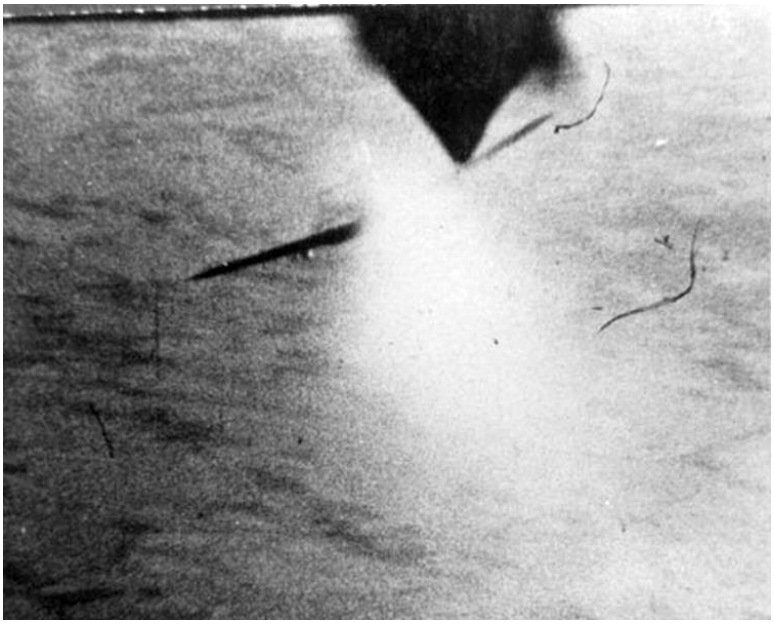
Kneeling-Coutoure,Hull,Taylor,Martin,Mendenhall,Cross,Marshall,Brown,Schutt,Harness, Spencer,Glantz
2nd Row -Ruork,Jackson,Williams,Hulderman,Bradley,Johnson,Mann,Smith,Stalcup,Todd, Kilner,McLear,Al White,Clark
3rd Row -Trembarth,Hauver,Woods,Betounes,Ellison,Priest,Bob White,Dick White,Woolard, Schultz,Horvath

Maj.Bert W.Marshall,Jr. C.O.
July 31-October 23,1944

354th Fighter Squadron unit picture taken early August 1944. Marshall shown in center with Henry Brown, the 355th FG top ace next to him. Royce Priest back center.

Lieutenant Royce Priest shown sitting in Marshall's lap after returning from rescuing his squadron CO on August 18th from a wheat field near St. Etienne marshaling yard.. It was first AAF 'Piggyback' rescue in a single engine fighter.

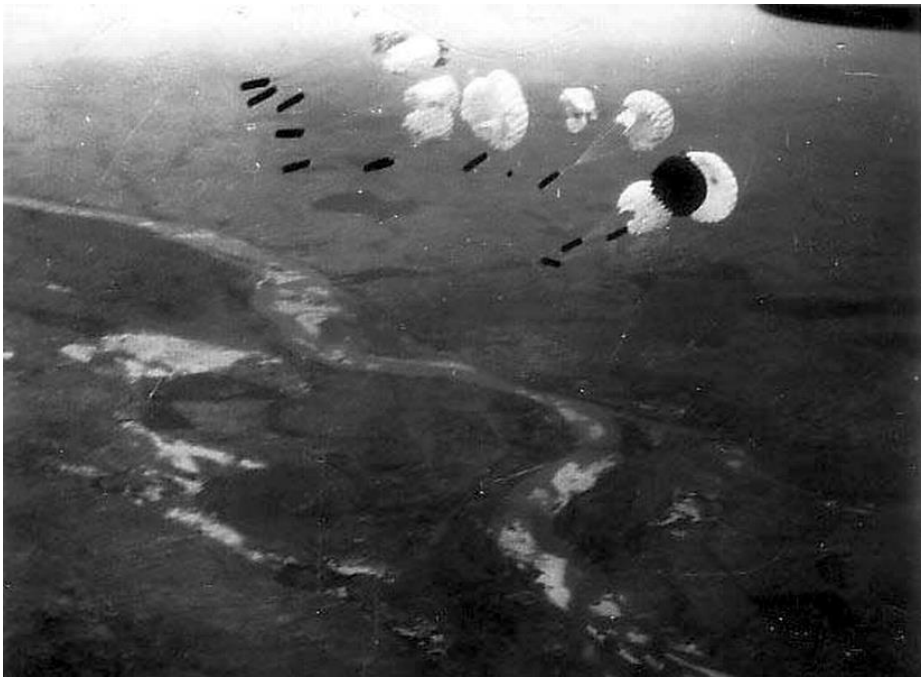
Marshall received P-51D-10 Jane III on August 26th, the same day he was promoted to Major. Five days later he was promoted to 355th FG Deputy Commander when Claiborne Kinnard transferred to 4th FG, to replace Blakeslee as Group CO in October.



Marshall combat film of #1 on September 11, SW Kassel. He would shoot down the leader, wingman, and heavily damage a third Bf 109 on the deck before driven away by a train flak battery.

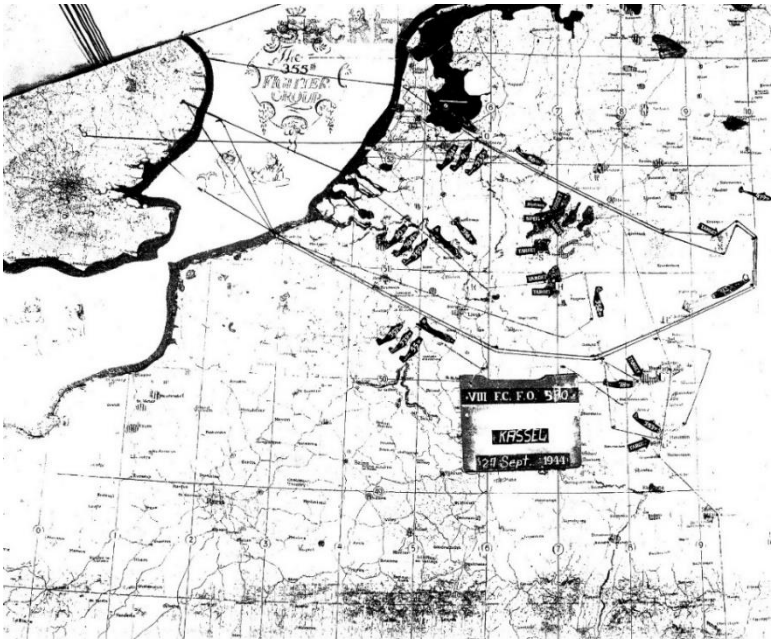
The Frantic VII mission map of 15 September. The same map was used for the September 18-22 Frantic Suttle mission over Warsaw, thence to Piryatin,Ukraine to refuel for the next escort mission over Szolnok marshaling yads, continuing to Foggia, Italy.

Captain Burt Sims, 354th FS Intelligence Officer, giving final briefing to 355FG fighter mission commander Marshall for Frantic VII in Jane III on morning September 18th.



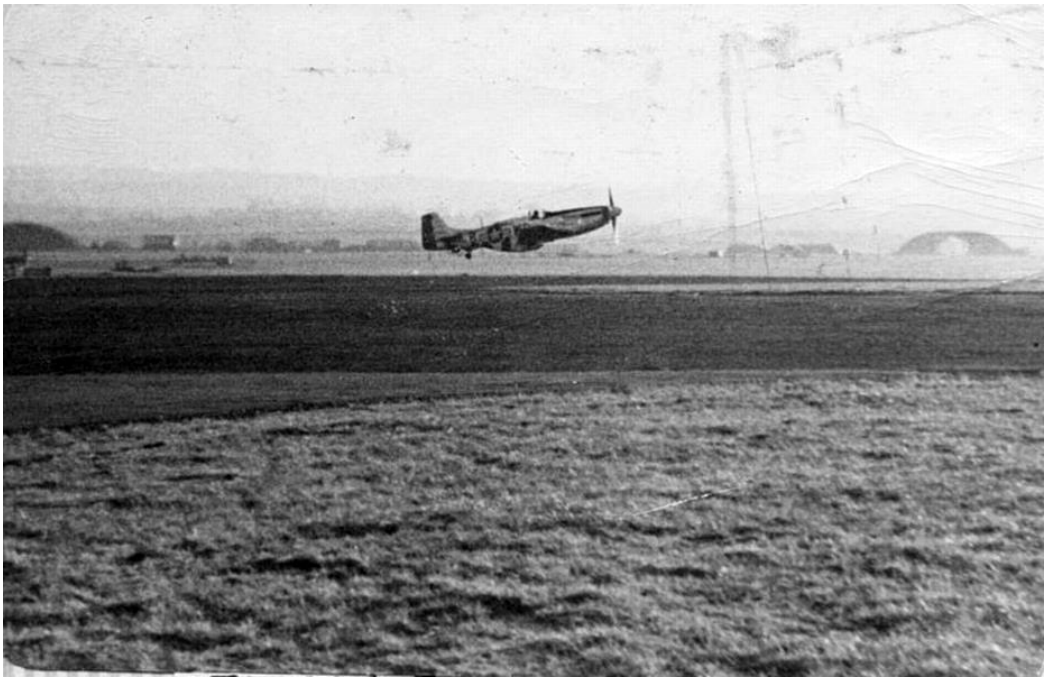
13th Bomb Wing dropping supply cannisters over Warsaw ghetto on September 18th. Soviet forces on the other side of Vistula River refused to help.

Bert Marshall with two Soviet VVS officers and 13th Bomb Wing Deputy CO at nearby Poltava airfield for the September 19 mission briefing to bomb Szolnok and continue to Foggia, Italy. Notice 12 mission maps in Marshall's left leg cargo pocket.



September 27th 355th FG briefing map. Notice the branch (RH side) at the IP to Kassel, proceeding separately due east. The mystery continues regarding the 'why the 445th BG left on a separate track'– only to lose 25 B-24s because they were unescorted.

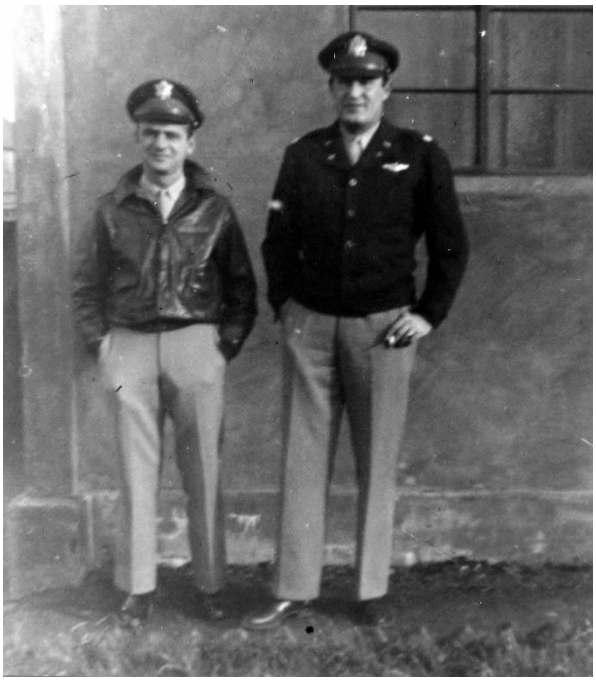
P-51D-10 Jane IV after Lenfest stuck Jane III in mud trying to rescue Brown on October 3rd. This photo circa October 6, 1944.



Marshall belly landing his Mustang for the third time. Jane IV was hit by flak near Nordhausen while strafing rail on November 29th, last mission of first tour in 8th Air Force.

Marshall was assigned P-51D-15 44-15279 briefly as Jane V. After he returned home, it was renamed Miss Miami for Lt. Scott Prothro. Lost to flak January 29, 1945.

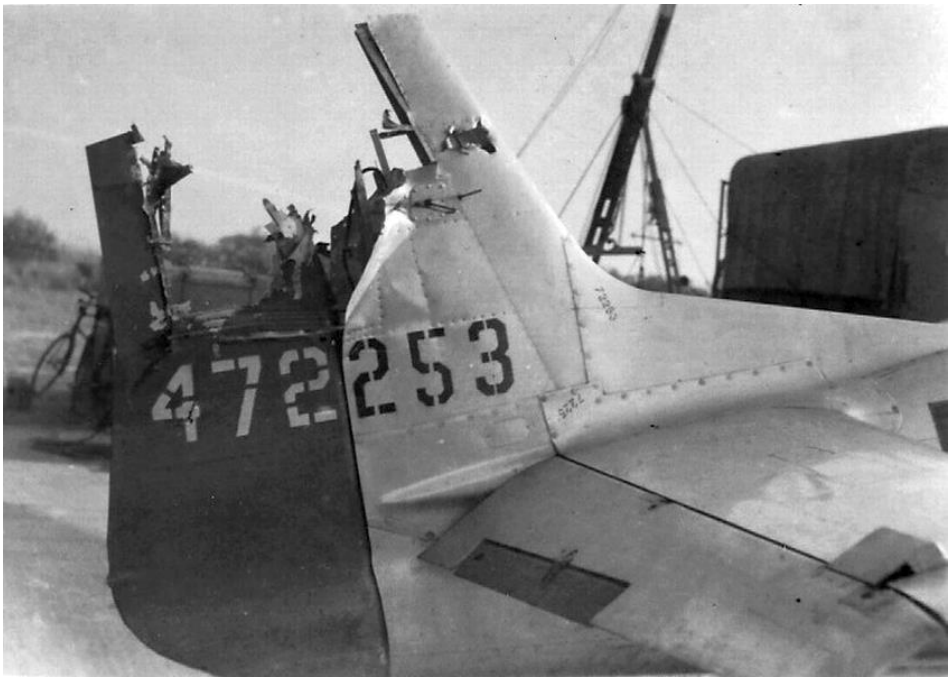
Bert and wife Jane at New Years Eve party while staying with Kinnard's at their horse farm, Franklin, TN. Claiborne Kinnard, Jr. taking the photo.



Marshall and Kinnard return to Steeple Morden together in February 1945. Kinnard played Tackle at Vanderbilt University several years earlier and had a Civil Engineering degree. Kinnard was Marshall's best friend and also Godfather to son James William Marshall.

P-51D-20 Mustang JANE VI 44-72253 from February 16 through April 13, 1945. Marshall flew 8 of his 11 missions of second tour in JANE VI. It was also 'borrowed' by Kinnard and White in early April.

Doolittle looking over JANE VI during the visit to 355th at Steeple Morden when Generals Spaatz, Kepner and Doolittle arrived to dispense medals in late March 1945.

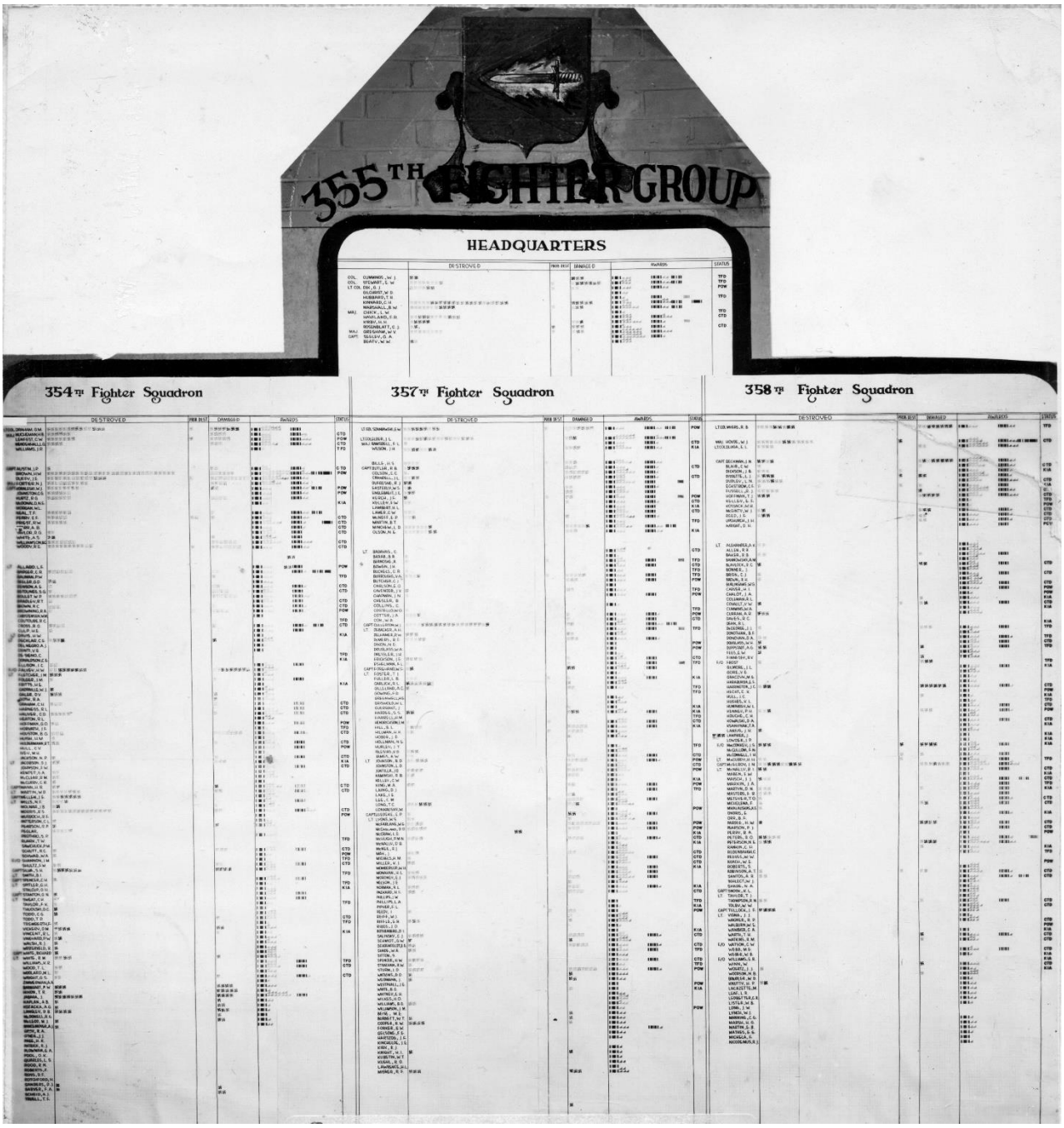


Battle damage while strafing airfield.

Marshall received P-51D-25 JANE VII on April 15th, flew his last two combat missions in this Mustang. JANE VII was transferred to another fighter group in Germany months after Marshall returned to the States in mid-October 1945.

355th FG CO in September 1945 climbing in JANE VII. JANE VII went to another FG when 355th FG de-activated in 1946 - and was lost in a thunderstorm in August 1946.

Crew Chief Mocerino in Kinnard's last wartime Mustang/ This P-51D-25 would be shot down by flak in Korea. Kinnard was second to Henry Brown as 355th FG top ace.



355th Fighter Group Victory Credits Board circa mid -April 1945. Also portrayed are the medals awarded to each pilot through that date of compilation. Marshall and Kinnard credits are placed alphabetically in the center of the Headquarters section at the top of the 355th board.

EUROPEAN THEATRE OF OPERATIONS

RECORD OF SORTIES AND CREDIT

355TH FIGHTER GROUP — Date Of Preparation 16 June 1945

PILOT Marshall, Bert W. RANK Lt. Col. CLASSIFICATION _____ SQDN. Hqs., 355th

LEGEND: Type of Mission — E - Escort, FB - Ftr.Bombr, W - Weather, A/S - Air-Sea Rescue, ST-Strafing, S-Sweep, R - Relay

VICTORY CREDITS: 4 A/C Destroyed; A/C Probably Dam.; A/C Damaged

AWARDS: Air Medal; DFC; Silver Star; D.S.C.

2nd Tour of Operations:

TOTAL OPERATIONAL TIME 59:25 FIRST MISSION 27-2-45 LAST MISSION 21-4-45

Sorties	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
FO & Type:	1670A RM	1679A RM	1742A RM	1806A RM	1810A RM	1828A RM	1843A RM
Date	27-2-45	1-3	12-3	21-3	23-3	24-3	26-3
Opnl.Time	6:00	6:20	6:00	3:20	5:50	6:00	4:05

8	9	10	11				
1887A RM	1918A RM	1962A RM	2053A RM				
3-4-30X	8-4	13-4	21-4				
4:50	5:30	5:30	6:00				

Air Medal)
1 OLC)
2 OLC) — All Confirmed
3 OLC)
4 OLC G.O. 301 2d Div. 14-11-44
5 OLC G.O. 16 2d Div. 10-1-45
6 OLC G.O. 16 2d Div. 10-1-45
7 OLC G.O. 16 2D Div. 10-1-45
8 OLC G.O. 117 2d Div. 3-4-45
9 OLC Recommended 21-5-45
10 OLC " 21-5-45
11 OLC " 21-5-45

D.F.C.) — All Confirmed
1 OLC)
2 OLC G.O. 327 2d Div. 3-12-44

Silver Star Recommended 20-5-45

1 JU-87 Des. 6-6-44 Near Chatres
2 ME-109's Des. 206-44 Bergen, Germany
1 ME-109 Des. Muhlhausen Area
1 ME-109 Des 8-6-44 S of Hamburg
2 ME-109's Des. 11-9-44 S of Kassel
4 U/I T/E Des. Husum A/D 13-4-45

1 ME-109 Dam. 11-9-44 S of Kassell
2 U/I T/E Dam. 13-4-45 Husum A/D

All victories have been used toward awards:

TEACHING 355 FIGHTER PILOTS TO FLY THE B-26 IN GERMANY

Eighth Air Force record of 11 missions flown during Marshall's second tour, citing awards and victory credits for all operations during both tours of duty during World War II. Marshall actually flew 13 missions during the second tour. Missing are F.O. 1665 on 26-2-1945 to Oranienburg 6.0 hours, and F.O. 1761 on 15-3-1945 to Berlin 6.0 hours from logbook and Form 5's. Total time second tour 13 missions and 71:25 hours..

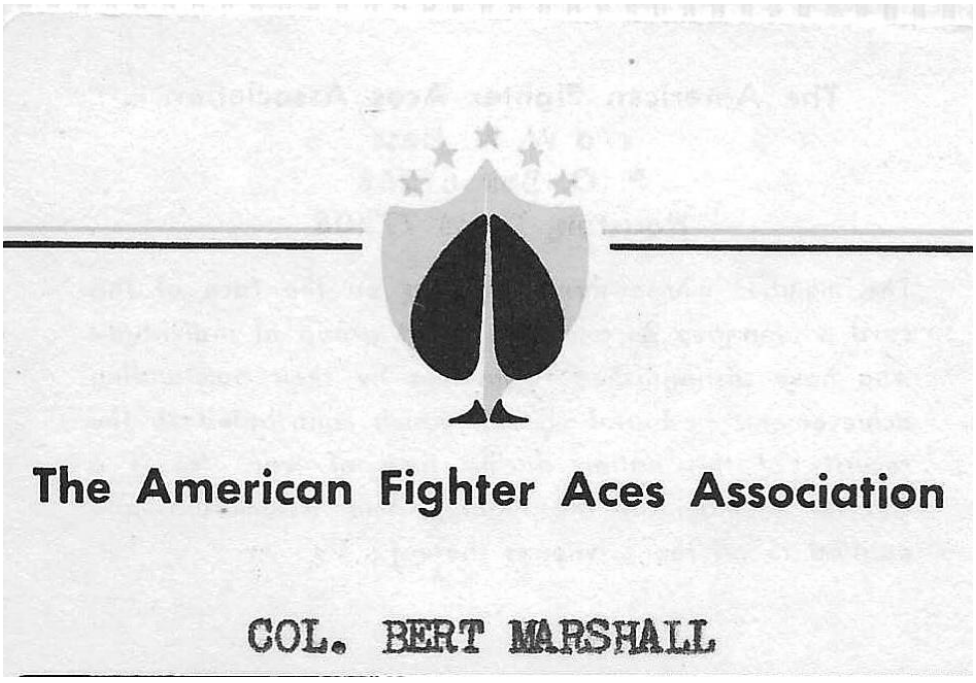
The 355th Memorial at Steeple Morden entrance circa 2003. It includes names Missing/KIA for the 355th FG, Scout Force (Exp), 2nd Scout Force and RAF, while based at Steeple Morden. Established by 355FGA and 355UK Committee. Credit Ken Lamb.

Marshall is preparing to give a Mustang ride for brother-in-law Captain Joe Hilsman, 5th Ranger Battalion. Joe was a Thompson carrying medical doctor that experienced the Liberation of Dachau, forever haunted by that example of the Holocaust.

Marshall family Jane, daughter Jane Gray, son Bill at Johnson AFB, Japan. Circa 1948 as CO of the 35th FG equipped with Mustangs during occupation of Japan.

Deputy Chief of Staff, Air Defense Command, Missiles Division. After two years of politics Marshall was worn out by service at the Pentagon, making transition to the civilian 'military-industrial complex a relatively easy decision in late 1957.

After a series of executive assignments at AVCO, American Airmotive, and Fairchild Hiller he served as VP A-7D programs at LTV for last 9 years before retiring at age 58.



Marshall was a charter member of the American Fighter Aces Association from inception in 1960.

Certificate of Membership

VOLABAMUS VOLAMUS

To all who shall see these presents, greeting:

Know ye, That

Bert W. Marshall, Jr.

who was appointed to

assume the membership of Walter A. Thomson who was an Airplane Pilot

in the Armed Forces of the United States prior to the Armistice 1918

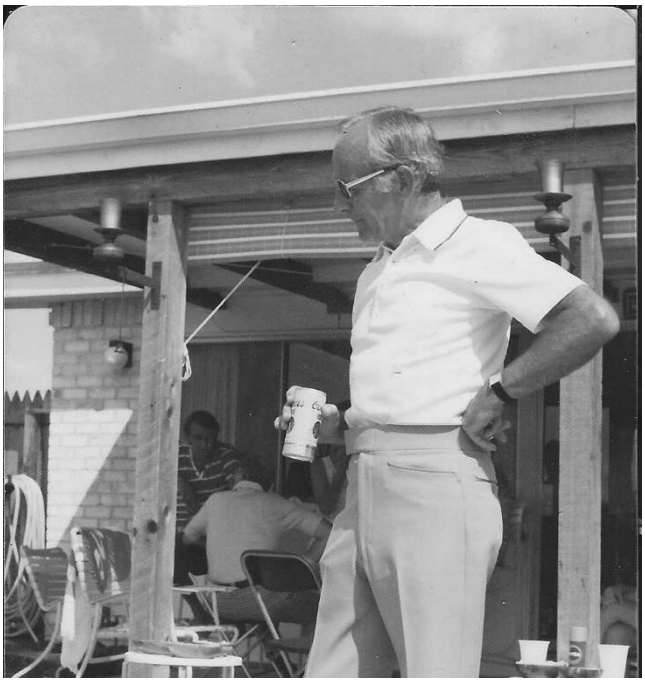
has become an Active member of

The Order of Daedalians

this thirteenth day of December in the

year of our Lord, one thousand nine hundred and seventy two

Marshall was enshrined in the Order of Daedalians, the honored society of military pilots.



Among the off-work past times Marshall enjoyed, including Golf, hunting dove and quail in the fall, shooting skeet, watching SEC college football – he truly enjoyed entertaining friends and family as chief Barbeque cook, serving rare steaks, beer and brown water.

Marshall was not only a warrior and father, but he was also the best friend of each of his children as mentor, coach and counsel. Here he is serving as Best Man to son Bill Marshall for his wedding in August 1968, Dallas, TX.

Marshall reuniting with old friend and fellow 354FS Commander, General Gordon Graham at Dallas 1968 American Fighter Aces Reunion.

Fighter Aces reunion golfing expedition with several 355th FG aces. L-R, Minchew, Stewart, Lenfest, Hovde and Garlich and Marshall circa 1975.

Sources

1. Military Times, Hall of Valor. *Bert Wilder Marshall, Jr.*
2. Find a Grave Memorial ID 106760583, Restland Memorial Park, Dallas, Texas.
3. American Air Museum in Britain. *Bert W. Marshall.*
4. Histories of 354 Fighter Squadron and 355 Fighter Group, USAFHRC, Maxwell AFB, AL.
5. Marshall, James William, *Our Might Always, History of the 355th FG in World War II,* Schiffer Publications, Ltd, Altglen, PA 2014.
6. Nashville Banner newspaper, Nashville, TN.
7. Family records, correspondence, logbooks, and compiled research.